

To all the MAGISTRATES in LONDON, &c.

Lriendes that be called Christians, and Christian Magistrates, are not you worse then the Jewes that took the Tythes, and had the store-houses, and all the strangers and widows and fatherlesse were satisfied, and there was not to be a Beggar in Israel? and your blinde men, widdows, and fatherlesse Children crying up and down, lying in every corner of your streets, crying up and down halfe a dozen together, up and downe your streets crying for bread, poor and lame? Is not this a shame to your Christianity? How dwelleth the love of God in you? How cloath you your own flesh? how feed you the hungry? Are you not come here under the reproof of James? How are you in the pure Religion, to visite the sicke, the fatherlesse, and the widows, when both blinde, and sicke, and halt, and lame lies up and downe, cries up and downe almost in every corner of the City, and men and women are so decked with gold and silver in their delicate state, that they cannot tell how to goe. Surely, surely you know not that you are all of one mould and blood that dwels upon the face of the Earth. Would not a little out of your abundance and superfluity maintain these poor children, boyes, halt, lame, and blinde, or set them at work that can work, and them that cannot, a place of relief for them; would not that be a grace to you? Is not that a disgrace to you, for them to lie up and downe in corners of your streets, and high wayes, and Steeple-house-doors? doth not this shew, that you want the wisdome of God to order the Creation? And is not this a grieve thinke you? And doe you not believe it is so, to all the tender and sober people? Is this true Christian Religion, to see so much Preaching, Praying, Sermons, Lectures, and to see so many blinde and lame, poor men, and women, and children up and down the streets? Is not this an ill favour? and at the Steeple-house door, is not this an ill favour among you, and in you? And the high profession ye profess? Deale your bread to the hungry, honour the Lord God with your substance; hide not thy self from thy owne flesh; Give to him that asketh of thee, or would borrow of thee, lend, hoping for nothing again. *He that turns his eare from hearing the cry of the poor, the Lord will not regard. He that despiseth the poore, despiseth his Maker.* So see this is the word of the Lord God to you all, and a charge to you all in the presence of the Lord God, see all the poor, the blinde, lame, the widows, the fatherlesse, that cries up and downe your streets for Bread, for maintenance at your Steeple-house doors, and high waies, and corners of streets and Alleys, that these be taken up and provided for, and them that can worke, that they may be set to it; and them that cannot, that they may be looked to, that there may be a good favour in your streets, that the Lord may come with a blessing upon you, and give you an increase double another way. Then you shew the fruits of true Religion, and the works of charity, and the fruits of love, and the fruits of the spirit; But the fruits of the flesh which hath superfluity; which faith, I have enough, I have superfluity, I have gold, I have money and goods in store, I have fine apparel, and jewels, and rings, and dainty dyet, and dressing my selfe in glasse, and buying glasse and pictures, and splices, and considers not the poor which is ready to be starved, crying in the street, and thou and you so proud, that you cannot tell how to go up and down the streets in your shooes and cloaths, and hats. How is many with their hairs powdered like bags of meale? How is many in their jewels, and rings, and gold, costly attire, which the Apostle speaks against, and checks such for; They regard not their own flesh, they regard not their Creator, that regard not their fellow-creature; that hee created; who created the one as well as the other, he causeth the Sun to shine upon the Just and the unjust, that destroys the creatures upon their lusts, such destroys the creatures for want of the creatures; slackening their hand, not giving to the poor. God loves a cheerfull giver, for God gives cheerfully, and freely, and liberally. *He that gives to the poor, lends to the Lord, the Lord restores him double again.* But peoples hearts are hardned, and they minde not to disgrace the Truth, and the custome of the cries of the blind, the lame, the widows, and the fatherlesse hath taken away the sense of compassion: Therefore let there be a store-house where all may be relieved, and let none want, that all may have enough. The Lord can take away from you as much in a week, that would (it may be) serve thousands of the poor, and crosse you by Sea and by Land for your hard-heartednesse; which otherwise you would see the blessing and feel the blessing both within and without, in store, in field, by Sea-and Land, as you come into the wisdome of God, and stand in it, and are preservers of the Creation, then God will blesse you, and what you take in hand will prosper: A preserver of the Creation visits the sick, and the fatherless, and causeth not the blinde to wander, cannot God bring the proudest of you all downe, and make you as poore as them that wander in the streets, because you do not do good in your life-time. Therefore come to work, and do the work of the Lord, while ye have poor, ye great ones, and come to the feeling of these things, ye Magistrates, that none of these may lie up and down your streets, while it is in your power to do good. From a lover of mercy and compassion to all that feed the wounded and feeble, lame, and blinde, and helplesse: so in tendernesse these things consider; for there is so much destroyed in your superfluity and vanity, that would maintain the weak, lame, and blinde, that is spent upon your lusts. O be a good favour, and do that which may be a good favour to the Lord God, and in the hearts of all people in your generations.

*From a lover of Truth, and
a friend of all your soules,*

G. F.
N